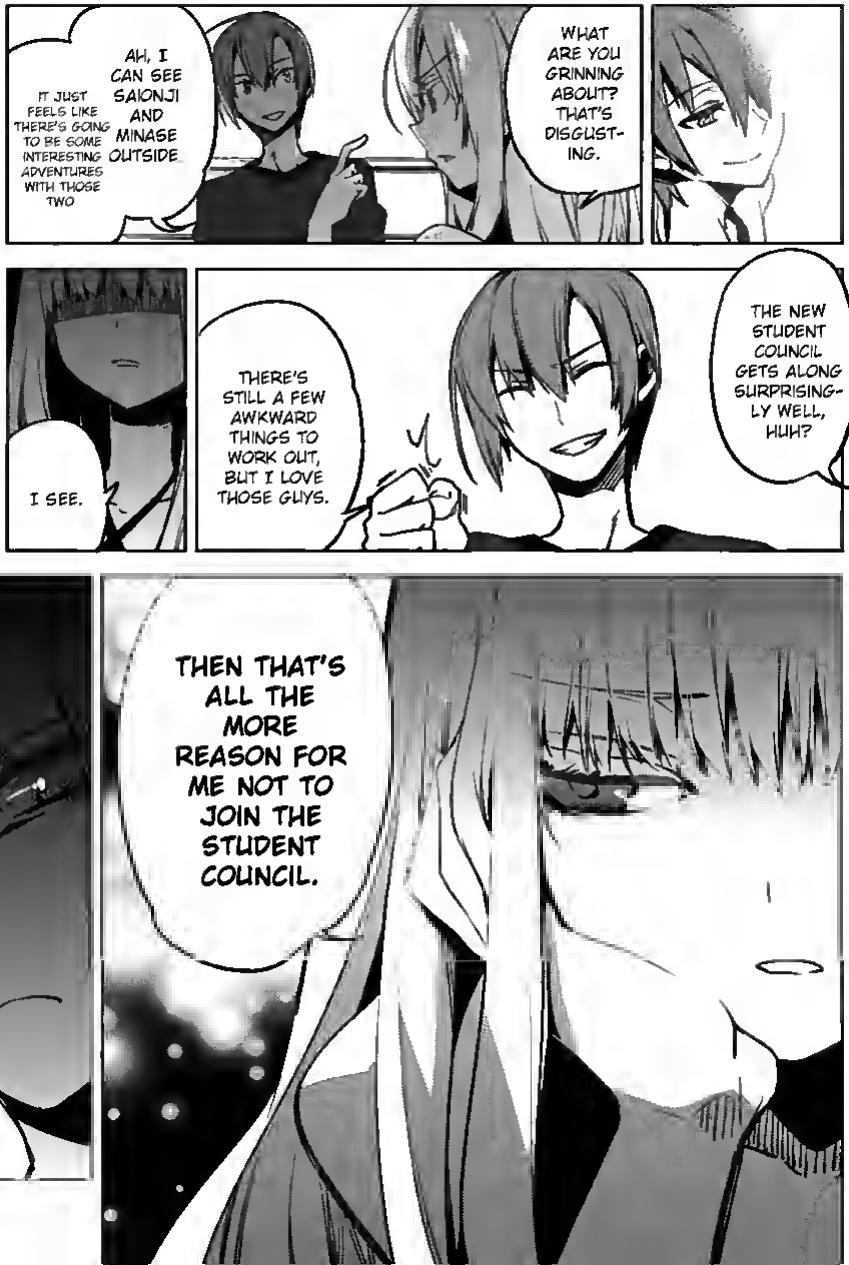
I IMMEDIATELY WENT AFTER HINOMORI
SINCE WE'RE HERE ANYWAYS, LET'S END THE DATE WITH THAT.
HM...
YEAH, LET'S GO.

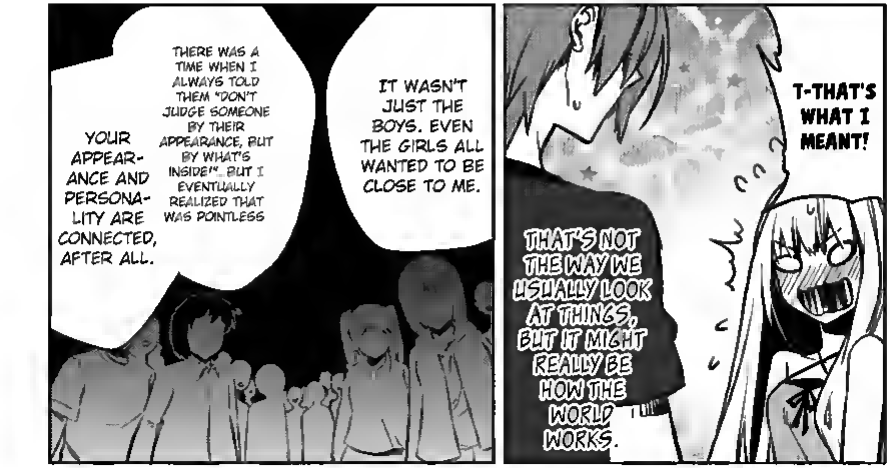
Chapter 8
The Unembellished Student Council


IT JUST FEELS LIKE THERE'S GOING TO BE SOME INTERESTING ADVENTURES WITH THOSE TWO
AH, I CAN SEE SAIONJI AND MINASE OUTSIDE.
WHAT ARE YOU GRINNING ABOUT? THAT'S DISGUST-ING.
I SEE.
THERE'S STILL A FEW AWKWARD THINGS TO WORK OUT, BUT I LOVE THOSE GUYS.
THE NEW STUDENT COUNCIL GETS ALONG SURPRISING-LY WELL, HUH?
THEN THAT'S ALL THE MORE REASON FOR ME NOT TO JOIN THE STUDENT COUNCIL.

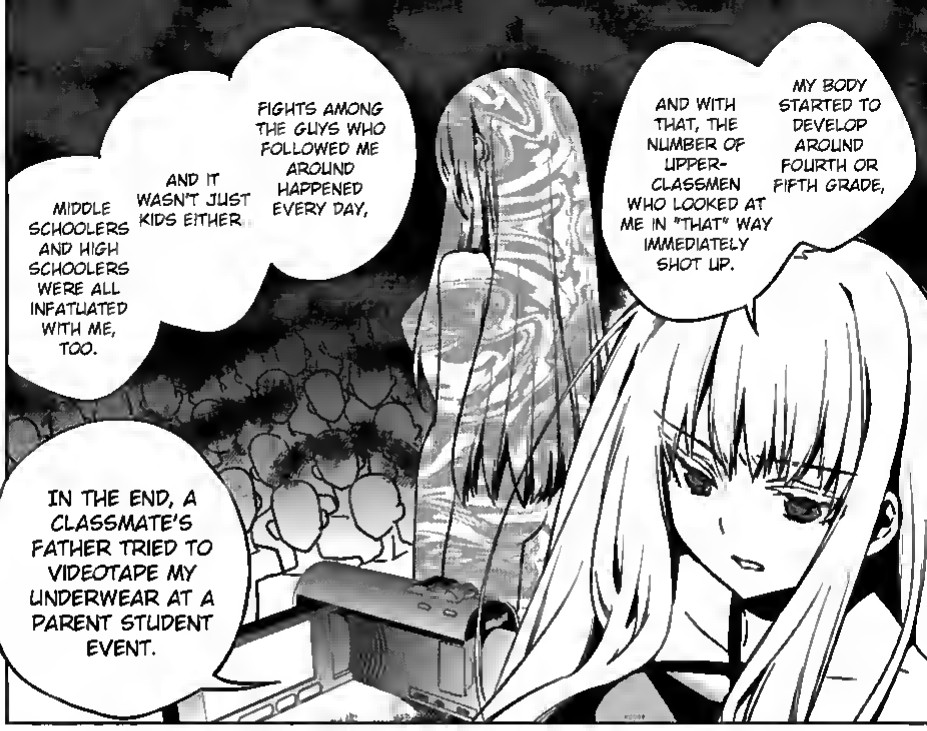
I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF SITUATION YOU HAVE GOING ON, BUT IT'S THOSE KINDS OF STATEMENTS THAT I JUST CAN'T ACCEPT.
I THOUGHT YOU'D SAY THAT.
SO WHAT DID YOU THINK OF MY UNMASKED SELF? YOU EXPERIENCED IT FIRSTHAND TODAY
HUH?
Unmasked?
To be honest, I had a lot of fun with you...
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN!

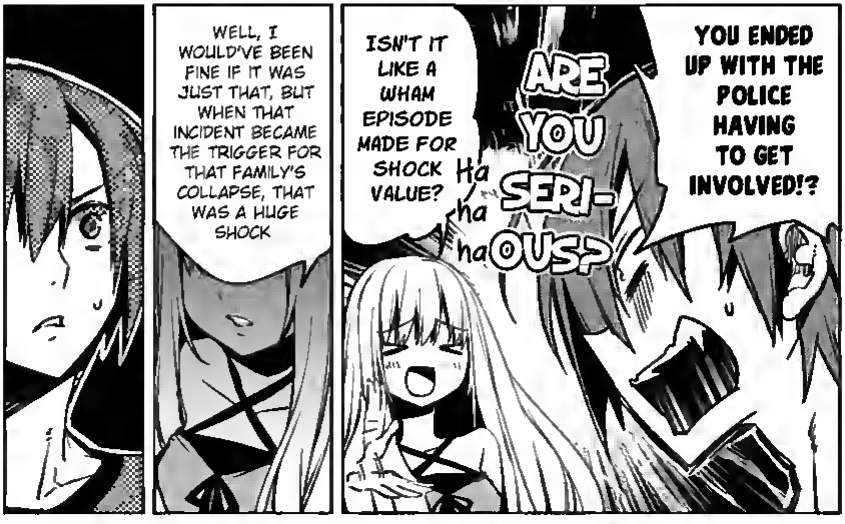
UNDERSTAND NOW? MY APPEARANCE SWAYS THE HEARTS OF OTHERS MUCH TOO EASILY.
.....

I HAD ALREADY UNDERSTOOD BY THE TIME I WAS IN SECOND GRADE.
TO GET ANYTHING IN THIS WORLD, BE IT FAME, FORTUNE, OR INFAMY...
BEAUTY IS THE ULTIMATE WEAPON.
YOU USUALLY DON'T WANT TO BECOME INFAMOUS, THOUGH...


T-THAT'S WHAT I MEANT!
THAT'S NOT THE WAY WE USUALLY LOOK AT THINGS, BUT IT MIGHT REALLY BE HOW THE WORLD WORKS.
IT WASN'T JUST THE BOYS. EVEN THE GIRLS ALL WANTED TO BE CLOSE TO ME.
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I ALWAYS TOLD THEM "DON'T JUDGE SOMEONE BY THEIR APPEARANCE, BUT BY WHAT'S INSIDE!". BUT I EVENTUALLY REALIZED THAT WAS POINTLESS
YOUR APPEARANCE AND PERSONALITY ARE CONNECTED, AFTER ALL.

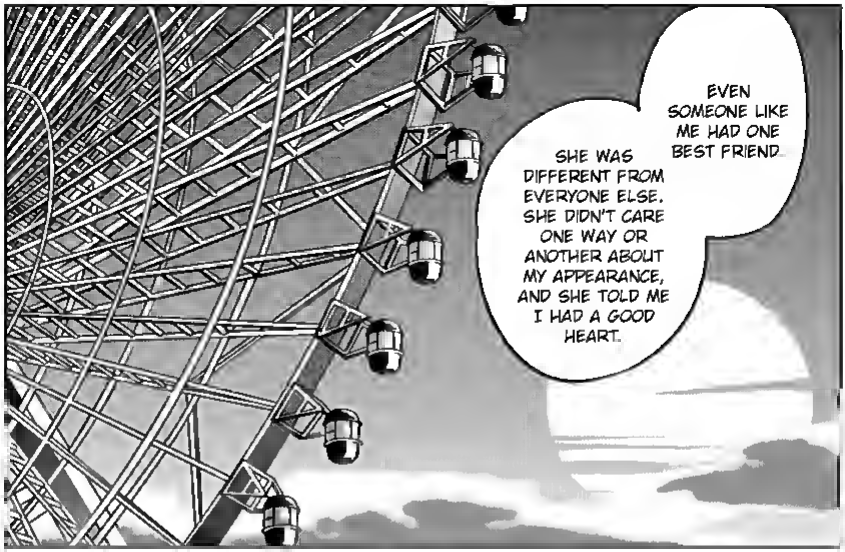
YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH SOME TOUGH THINGS
IT'S ALL IN VAIN I ATTRACT PEOPLE WHO PLACE MORE IMPORTANCE ON APPEARANCE THAN ANYTHING ELSE...
I'LL LISTEN TO YOUR STORY.


MY BODY STARTED TO DEVELOP AROUND FOURTH OR FIFTH GRADE,
AND WITH THAT, THE NUMBER OF UPPER-CLASSMEN WHO LOOKED AT ME IN "THAT" WAY IMMEDIATELY SHOT UP.
FIGHTS AMONG THE GUYS WHO FOLLOWED ME AROUND HAPPENED EVERY DAY,
AND IT WASN'T JUST KIDS EITHER
MIDDLE SCHOOLERS AND HIGH SCHOOLERS WERE ALL INFATUATED WITH ME, TOO.
IN THE END, A CLASSMATE'S FATHER TRIED TO VIDEOTAPE MY UNDERWEAR AT A PARENT STUDENT EVENT.


WELL, I WOULD'VE BEEN FINE IF IT WAS JUST THAT, BUT WHEN THAT INCIDENT BECAME THE TRIGGER FOR THAT FAMILY'S COLLAPSE, THAT WAS A HUGE SHOCK
ISN'T IT LIKE A WHAM EPISODE MADE FOR SHOCK VALUE?
Ha ha ha
ARE YOU SERI-OUS?
YOU ENDED UP WITH THE POLICE HAVING TO GET INVOLVED!?

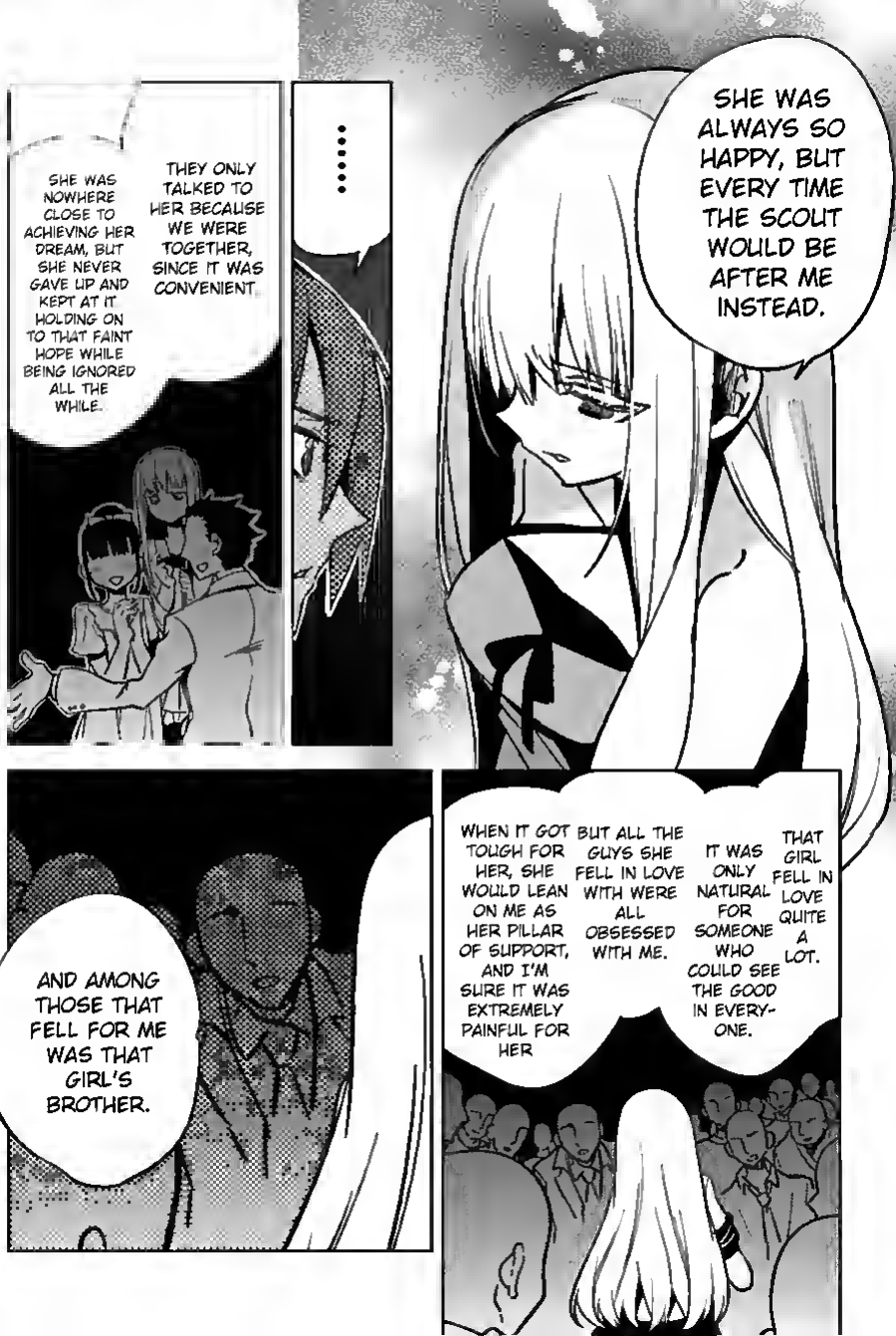
IT'S TRUE THAT COUPLES WILL FIGHT WHILE AROUND YOU, AND SOME PEOPLE WILL BE SEDUCED LIKE I SAW TODAY, BUT THAT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, RIGHT?
BUT YOU KNOW...
IF YOU CAN JOKE ABOUT THAT KIND OF INCIDENT, THEN WHY DO YOU HAVE SUCH A STRONG SENSE OF GUILT FOR THAT SPECIFIC PART?
HOW CAN I NOT FEEL GUILTY WHEN I'VE EVEN HURT THE PERSON CLOSEST TO ME...?
Mutter

IT'S THE SAME KIND OF THING AS WHAT YOU DID WITH YOUR STEP SISTER.
IT'S LIKE I SAID.
WHAT?
I HURT THE PERSON WHO WAS DEAREST TO ME...

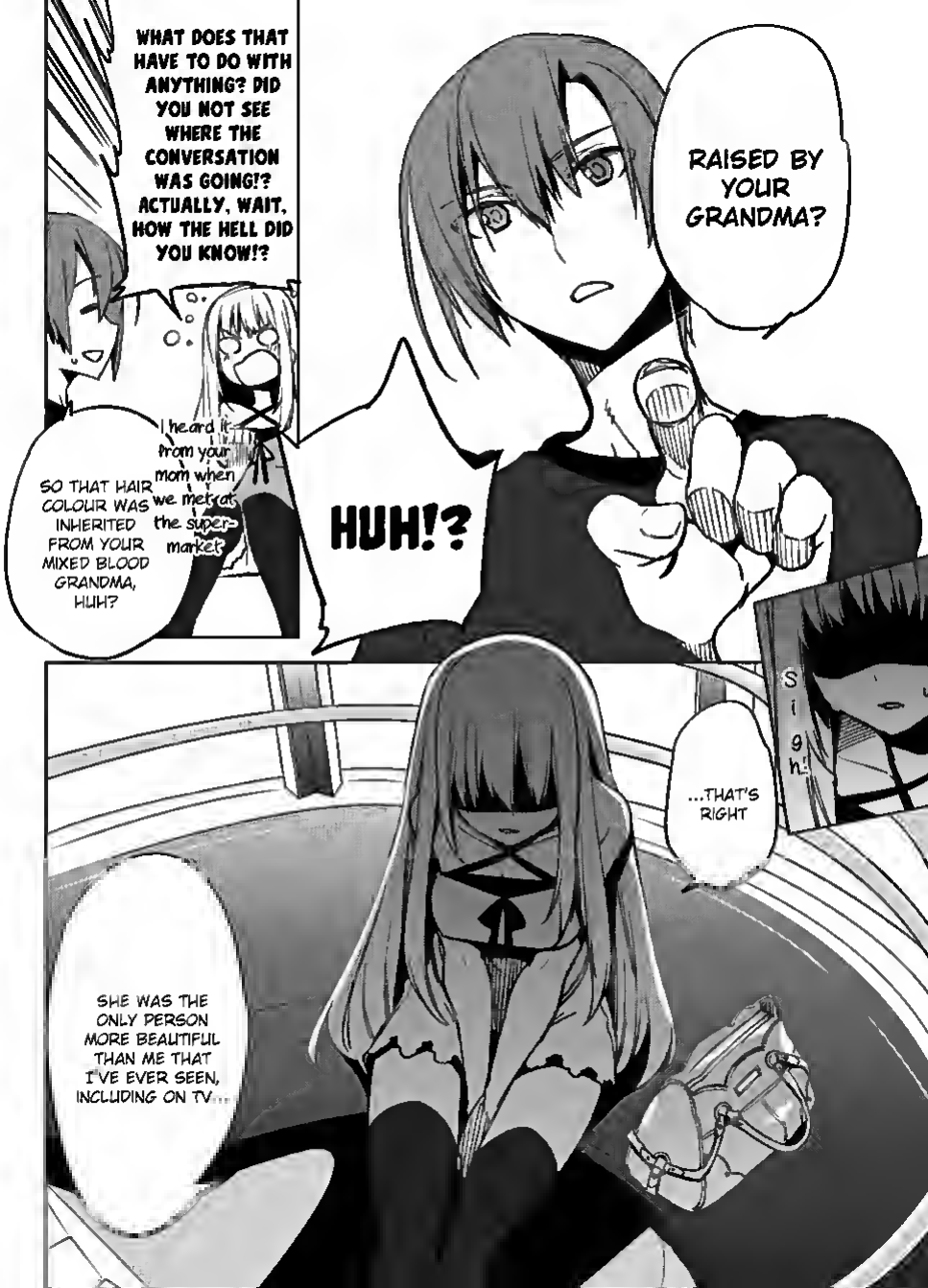

EVEN SOMEONE LIKE ME HAD ONE BEST FRIEND.
SHE WAS DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE. SHE DIDN'T CARE ONE WAY OR ANOTHER ABOUT MY APPEARANCE, AND SHE TOLD ME I HAD A GOOD HEART.

SHE REALLY WAS A GOOD, GENTLE GIRL.
HER SPECIALTY WAS SEEING THE GOOD IN EVERYTHING, SHE HAD SO MANY THINGS SHE LOVED, INCLUDING HER DEAR BROTHER. SHE WAS A GREAT PERSON THROUGH AND THROUGH.
BUT THAT GIRL TENDED TO ONLY SEE THE GOOD SIDE, SO THERE WERE A LOT OF DANGERS THAT SHE COULDN'T ANTICIPATE BECAUSE OF THAT, I FELT LIKE I NEEDED TO BE WITH HER TO LOOK OUT FOR HER.
WE WERE INSEPAR-ABLE.

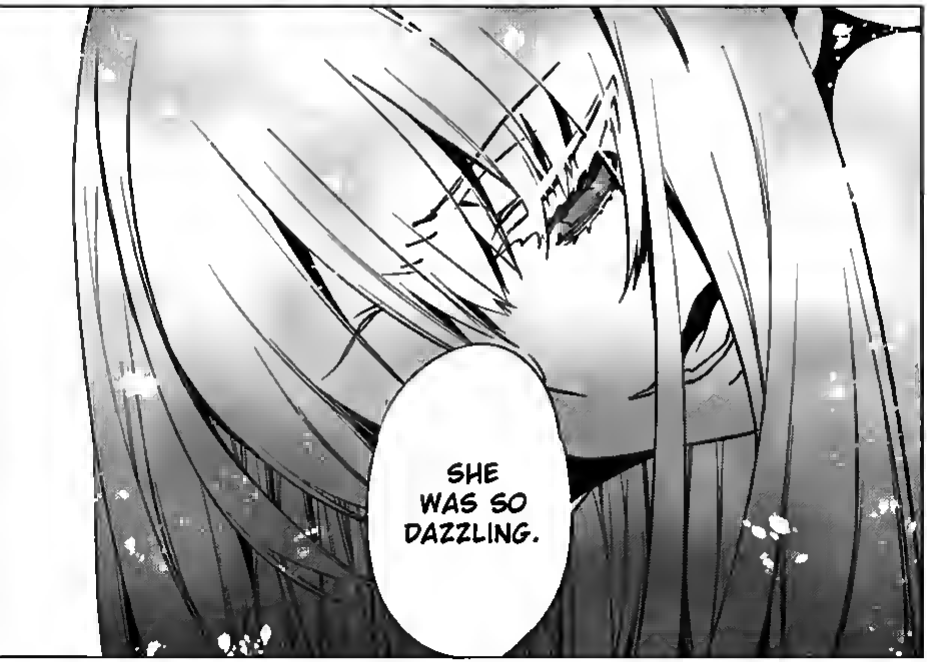
HER DREAM WAS TO BECOME AN ACT-RESS,
AND WE WOULD ATTRACT SCOUTS EVERY TIME WE WENT OUT TOGETHER.
WOW, THAT'S AMAZING!
BUT-


SHE WAS ALWAYS SO HAPPY, BUT EVERY TIME THE SCOUT WOULD BE AFTER ME INSTEAD.
THAT GIRL FELL IN LOVE QUITE A LOT.
IT WAS ONLY NATURAL FOR SOMEONE WHO COULD SEE THE GOOD IN EVERY-ONE.
BUT ALL THE GUYS SHE FELL IN LOVE WITH WERE ALL OBSESSED WITH ME.
WHEN IT GOT TOUGH FOR HER, SHE WOULD LEAN ON ME AS HER PILLAR OF SUPPORT, AND I'M SURE IT WAS EXTREMELY PAINFUL FOR HER
AND AMONG THOSE THAT FELL FOR ME WAS THAT GIRL'S BROTHER.
.....
THEY ONLY TALKED TO HER BECAUSE WE WERE TOGETHER, SINCE IT WAS CONVENIENT.
SHE WAS NOWHERE CLOSE TO ACHIEVING HER DREAM, BUT SHE NEVER GAVE UP AND KEPT AT IT HOLDING ON TO THAT FAINT HOPE WHILE BEING IGNORED ALL THE WHILE.

AND IN THE END, HER FAMILY WAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED...
HE WAS UNUSUALLY OBSESSED WITH ME, TO THE POINT WHERE HE BEGAN STALKING ME. HE EVEN USED AND MANIPULATED HIS SISTER TO GET CLOSER TO ME.
BEFORE LONG, IT BECAME AN ISSUE AMONG THEIR ENTIRE FAMILY,
WELL? YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I INVITED YOU OUT TODAY NOW, RIGHT?
THAT WAS MY THIRD YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL, WHERE I LEARNED THE VALUE OF KEEPING MY DISTANCE FROM OTHERS. AND SO I ENROLLED IN HEKIYOU WHERE NO ONE KNEW ME.
I STILL CAN'T ACCEPT THAT.
BUT, I STILL CAN'T-
I FINALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT THE TRUE FORM OF HER HOSTILITY TOWARDS ME IS.
AND DISTANCING AND ISOLATING YOURSELF FROM OTHERS...
THE REGRET FROM HURTING SOMEONE YOU LOVE
WERE YOU-


WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ANYTHING? DID YOU NOT SEE WHERE THE CONVERSATION WAS GOING!? ACTUALLY, WAIT, HOW THE HELL DID YOU KNOW!?
I heard it from your mom when we met at the supermarket
SO THAT HAIR COLOUR WAS INHERITED FROM YOUR MIXED BLOOD GRANDMA, HUH?
HUH!?
RAISED BY YOUR GRANDMA?
Sigh
...THAT'S RIGHT
SHE WAS THE ONLY PERSON MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN ME THAT I'VE EVER SEEN, INCLUDING ON TV...

GRAND-MA WAS SO STUN-NINGLY GOR-GEOUS!
HER HAIR DIDN'T JUST SPARKLE LIKE MINE, IT GLISTENED WITH ELEGANCE!
SHE ALWAYS HAD A KIND SMILE ON HER FACE!
SHE WOULD PRAISE ME FROM THE BOTTOM OF HER HEART...
WHEN I WOULD VISIT HER ROOM WOULD ALWAYS BE SPARKLING CLEAN, AND SHE WAS PUNCTUAL EVEN IN HER SLEEP SCHEDULE, AND EVERYONE RELIED ON HER, AND, AND...


SHE WAS SO DAZZLING.

YOU SURE DO LOVE YOUR GRANDMA...
O-OF COURSE I DO! YOU CAN'T FIND A BETTER GRANDMA ANYWHERE ELSE!
APPARENTLY HER GRANDMA PASSED AWAY IN HER THIRD YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL, RIGHT AS THE PROBLEMS WITH HER BEST FRIEND AROSE
CLOSING OFF HER OWN HEART ISN'T UNREASONABLE

WHAT IS?
IN FACT, IT'S ACTUALLY THE OPPOSITE
IF I WAS ONLY LOOKING AT YOUR PROBLEMS, I WOULD THINK THAT YOU HATED YOUR HAIR AND FIGURE THAT HAVE CAUSED YOU SO MUCH TROUBLE. BUT THAT'S NOT THE CASE.
THAT SILVER HAIR PASSED DOWN TO YOU BY YOUR GRANDMA, AND HOW SHE SMILED AS SHE PRAISED YOU.
YOU'RE REALLY PROUD OF IT, AREN'T YOU?

BEING PROUD OF THAT SILVER HAIR AND FIGURE IS EXACTLY WHY YOU CAN'T ACCEPT IT WHEN THEY CAUSE ALL KINDS OF ISSUES, AND WHY YOU CAN'T HANDLE IT, AM I RIGHT?
AND THAT'S WHY, NO MATTER HOW OTHERS LOOK AT YOU, YOU HAVEN'T CUT IT OR DYED IT AT ALL.
..THAT'S RIGHT
I'M WEARING THE MASK AND WIG NOW, BUT IT'S ALREADY WAY TOO LATE!!
I LOVE MYSELF IN THE FIRST PLACE, BUT AMONGST THAT, THIS HAIR IS...SPECIAL.
BUT BECAUSE I WAS SELFISH AND DIDN'T DEAL WITH IT PROPERLY, I HURT MY BEST FRIEND.
YOU'RE A KIND PERSON, HINOMORI

HUH!? I'M A KIND PER-SON?
WHAT KIND OF NON-SENSE ARE YOU SPOUT-ING...
YOU'VE SUFFERED SO MUCH BECAUSE OF YOUR HAIR AND APPEARANCE, BUT BECAUSE SOMEONE IMPORTANT TO YOU PRAISED THEM, YOU'VE ENDURED IT AND LEFT THEM AS IS.
ISN'T THAT AN INCREDIBLY STRONG AND KIND THING TO DO?
THE THING WITH YOUR FRIEND, TOO.
YOU DIDN'T WANT TO HURT HER ANYMORE SO YOU DISTANCED YOURSELF FROM HER VOLUNTARILY, DIDN'T YOU?
ISN'T THAT ENOUGH PROOF THAT YOU'RE WAY TOO KIND?

....SHUT UP...
SHUT UP SHUT UP SHUT UP! DON'T TRAMPLE INTO MY HEART AS YOU PLEASE!
THIS IS WHY I HATE YOU STUDENT COUNCIL PEOPLE!

SHIINA MAFUYU, WHO EVEN THOUGH WAS COMPLETELY ISOLATED FROM OTHER PEOPLE, WHETHER IT WAS IN CLASS OR IN THE STUDENT COUNCIL, BECAME THE GLUE HOLDING PEOPLE TOGETHER!
SHIINA MINATSU WHO HAS NOT JUST LOOKS, BUT A GOOD PERSONALITY TO BOOT, PARADING AROUND SHOWING OFF HER FULFILLING YOUTH!
AKABA CHIZURU, WHO WAS CURSED BY HER BEAUTY LIKE ME BUT CAN STILL BE THE CENTRE OF ATTENTION!
AND SAKURANO KURIMU, WHO DOESN'T THINK ABOUT A THING BUT IS STILL BELOVED BY EVERYONE!
LIKE YOU, PRANCING AROUND WITH A HAREM AFTER HURTING YOUR OWN STEP SISTER!
YOU ALL DISGUST ME! IT MAKES ME WANT TO PUKE!!

NO YOU DON'T.
DON'T YOU DARE TRY TO GET CLOSE TO ME EVER AGAIN! I LOATHE EVERY SINGLE MEMBER OF YOUR STUPID STUDENT COUNCIL, I HATE IT I HATE IT I HA-
YOU'RE JUST LISTENING TO MY STORY TO TRY TO SWEET TALK ME. BUT THAT WON'T WORK BECAUSE THESE ARE MY TRUE FEELINGS!

WAS GRADUATION DAY, RIGHT?
碧陽学園卒業式

W... WHAT ARE YOU...
AFTER ALL, THE ONE DAY YOU TOOK OFF YOUR MASK AND WIG LAST YEAR...

FOR THE GRADUATION CEREMONY THAT WE PRESIDED OVER AS THE STUDENT COUNCIL,
YOU THOUGHT "THIS IS AN OCCASION THAT I SHOULD TAKE OFF MY MASK AND WIG FOR", DIDN'T YOU?
THE FACT THAT YOU WOULD TREAT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY WITH SO MUCH RESPECT IS PROOF ENOUGH THAT YOU LOVE HEKIYOU ACADEMY JUST AS MUCH AS WE DO IN THE STUDENT COUNCIL.
...I STILL REGRET THAT DECISION.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHY I DID THAT,
IT WAS A MISTAKE OF THE LIFETIME..
You really are hopeless
YOU MEAN THE MISTAKE OF A LIFETIME?

HAHA, YOU'RE SO INTERESTING
ONLY OTOME GAME CHARACTERS WHO CAN BE CONQUERED ARE ALLOWED TO SUDDENLY SAY THAT TO SOMEONE'S FACE!
HEY, TSUNDERE GIRL, YOU HAVE ABSOLUTE-LY NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, RIGHT?
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM!? SO IT'S TOO EASY TO MESS UP! THAT'S NOT MY FAULT! IT WAS INCONCEIVABLE! SUPPLY AND DEMAND! TABULA RASA!
HEY, WHY DON'T YOU JOIN THE STUDENT COUNCIL? YOU WON'T HAVE TO WEAR YOUR MASK OR WIG THERE
WHY DON'T YOU JUST CONQUER ME THEN?
Ha ha ha
WHEN YOU WERE INSULTING THE FORMER STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBERS EARLIER-
NO MATTER HOW I FELT ABOUT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY, THE FACT IS I STILL HATE THE STUDENT COUNCIL!
Are you an idiot!?
Stupid! Stupid!
HAAH!? HOW DID WE GET BACK TO THIS CONVER-SATION!?

ALL YOU TALKED ABOUT WERE THINGS THEY HAD THAT YOU WANTED.
TO PUT IT SIMPLY, FOR THE LAST YEAR YOU WERE ENVIOUS OF US
IF THAT'S HOW IT IS, THEN ISN'T BEING ELECTED TO THE STUDENT COUNCIL A GOOD THING FOR YOU?

WHA...
IT SHOULD BE A SIMPLE DECISION

SIMPLE...?
ヒソ...
ヒソ...
AHH!
OW!
ギャー
ギャー
AHH!
OW!
THAT'S A RIDICULOUSLY IMPORTANT THING TO LOSE! IT WOULD BE THE BIGGEST LOSS OF MY LIFE! I'M DEFINITELY NOT JOINING THE STUDENT COUNCIL!
IT'S OK, IF YOU'RE WITH ME THE ONLY THING YOU'LL LOSE IS YOUR VIRGINITY!
WERE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME? I HAVE SO MUCH TO LOSE FROM REVEALING MY APPEARANCE!
Sigh...
That hurt...

TO TELL THE TRUTH, I LOOKED UP TO THE STUDENT COUNCIL LAST YEAR, AND JUST NOW I SAW VERY WELL THAT THE NEW STUDENT COUNCIL MEMBERS ARE GREAT PEOPLE. THAT'S ALL THE MORE REASON FOR ME NOT TO JOIN.
...THANK YOU... THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE TALKED ABOUT THIS WITH SOMEONE ELSE, SO I ACTUALLY FEEL RELIEVED.
...I'M AFRAID OF HURTING THEM.
THERE REALLY IS NO SOLUTION.
TO BE LOVED, TO BE ENVIED, TO BE HATED...TO DESTROY. MY BEAUTY IS LIKE A WEAPON, LIKE HOW I TOOK VOTES AWAY FROM YOU IN THE ELECTION.

LOOK, THERE'S NO WAY OUT OF THIS-
whoa! my wife really is the cutest girl in the world!
WHA....!?
HUH!?
LOOK, I'M SORRY, AND TO THE TRUTH IT'S REALLY EMBARRASSING FOR ME, TOO.
BUT THANKS TO THIS, THE COUPLES THAT WERE FIGHTING EARLIER SHOULD GET ALONG BETTER.
SO...
HEY! WHO'S YOUR WIFE!? YOU STUPID WEIRDO!
Look, everyone else is fawning over you too! You're the best! I'm so lucky to have you as my wife!

BY BEING ANNOYING, WE CAN MAKE THE ATMOSPHERE TOO AWKWARD FOR ARGUING AND FIGHTING!
I CALL IT THE IDIOT COUPLE STRATAGEM!
What- the- hell
THAT'S JUST ONE WAY OF SOLVING YOUR PROBLEMS! I HAVE OTHER METHODS TOO, WANT TO HEAR ABOUT THEM!? THERE ARE PLANS THAT ARE M-RATED TOO!
LIKE HELL I WOULD! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU!?
From now on, I'm going to fight for you too.
HUH...?
I said leave it to me
because I've fallen in love with you today, and I would do anything for the women I love.
THEN... IF, FOR EXAMPLE

WHAT IF...
IF SOMEONE ELSE WERE TO GO AFTER ME WHEN I DIDN'T WANT THEM TO?
I'LL PUT ALL MY EFFORT INTO GETTING BACK WHAT THEY'VE LOST!
WHAT IF MY BEAUTY HURTS SOMEONE?
I'LL ACT STUPID AND MAKE THEM LAUGH.
WHAT IF SOMEONE GETS JEALOUS OF ME?

LIKE HER BEST FRIEND'S BROTHER FROM BEFORE
THAT KIND OF STUFF-
-WHAT IF THERE WAS SOMEONE WHO WAS SO OBSESSED WITH ME THAT THEIR FAMILY AND THEIR LIFE WAS RUINED BECAUSE OF IT?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THOSE THINGS IT'S FINE TO NOT THINK ABOUT THEM.
THAT'S THEIR OWN FAULT
YOU'RE IMPOSSIBLE TO TALK TO!
HAHA... I GET IT. IN THE END YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER PERVERT WHO WANTS ME TO HIMSELF.
YUP
YOU'LL HELP THE GIRLS WHO ARE JEALOUS OF ME, BUT YOU WOULD JUST ABANDON THOSE WHO FALL IN LOVE IN ME?

THAT'S WHY I CAN SACRIFICE ANYTHING FOR YOU, AND YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT A THING.
HOW ABOUT IT? NOT BAD, RIGHT?
THAT'S TERRIBLE
YOU'RE THE ABSOLUTE WORST.

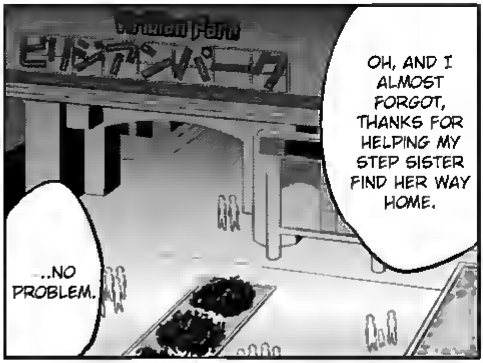
WHAT KIND OF IDIOT ARE YOU...
ALTHOUGH YOUR PROBLEMS WON'T BE SOLVED RIGHT AWAY, YOU'LL DEFINITELY BE A MILLION TIMES HAPPIER WHEN THERE'S MORE PEOPLE WORRYING ABOUT YOU.
EVEN IF IT WAS SOMEONE LESS FLASHY, TRYING TO LIVE WITHOUT INFLUENCING ANYONE ELSE IS INCREDIBLY HARD

BESIDES, I THINK HAVING SOMEONE HELP YOU OUT AND THEN PAYING IT FORWARD AND HELPING SOMEONE ELSE LATER ISN'T A BAD WAY TO LIVE YOUR LIFE.
ME... HELPING SOMEONE ELSE...?
THAT'S RIGHT!
AND THE BEST PLACE TO DO THAT WOULD BE THE STUDENT COUNCIL.
I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT HOW I TRULY FEEL

AS A GUY, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO JUDGE YOU ENTIRELY BASED ON YOUR PERSONALITY WITHOUT LOOKING AT YOUR BODY
SORRY IF YOU'RE DISAPPOINTED BY THAT.
BUT, I LOVE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU. YOUR HAIR, YOUR FACE, YOUR BODY, ALONG WITH YOUR PERSONALITY.
SO I'D BE HAPPY IF WE COULD BE IN THE STUDENT COUNCIL TOGETHER.

THAT'S NOT JUST MY OPINION. I'M SURE EVERYONE ELSE THINKS SO, TOO.

LET'S GO HAVE LUNCH WITH ALL THREE OF US SOME TIME.
...SURE


OH, AND I ALMOST FORGOT, THANKS FOR HELPING MY STEP SISTER FIND HER WAY HOME.
..NO PROBLEM.

TCH-
Don't get too com/or-table!
KILL YOURSELF

...WANT TO HOLD HANDS?

I'VE DONE ALL I COULD TODAY.

WHAT HINOMORI NEEDS NOW IS TIME TO THINK

MONDAY AFTER-SCHOOL
NOW ALL WE CAN DO IS WAIT...
KEN-SAN, WERE YOU ABLE TO PROPERLY CONVINCE HER?
Y-YEAH! I DID MY BEST!
PRESIDENT SAIONJI, IT'S WELL KNOWN THAT SUGISAKI-KUN'S BEST IS EQUIVALENT TO A NORMAL PERSON'S WORST PERFORMANCE
YOU IDIOT! IN THE END, YOU WERE MOVED BY MY SPEECH TOO!
WELL, I'M MENTALLY PREPARED TO WAIT UNTIL NIGHTFALL LIKE BEFORE, IF THAT'S NECESSARY ..
YO- I FINALLY FOUND IT-

THIS PLACE IS WAY TOO HARD TO FIND...
のそ
のそ
YOU ACTUALLY CAME!
WHAT'S WITH THE TREATMENT!? YOU WERE THE ONE WHO TOLD ME TO COME!
AH
I DIDN'T THINK YOU WOULD COME SO QUICKLY...
DID I DO THAT GOOD OF A JOB TRYING TO CONVINCE YOU!?
STUPID!
とぼとぼ

...I just came because I felt like it, okay!?
I-IT'S NOT LIKE I WANTED TO INTRODUCE MYSELF TO EVERYONE OR ANYTHING!
DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA!
わぁぁぁっ
Cute-!
It's a textbook tsundere

S-SO, I'M THE STUDENT COUNCIL'S... SECRETARY?
HINOMORI TOUKO...FROM NOW ON...NO, THAT'S NOT RIGHT, I'LL BE JOINING THE STUDENT COUNCIL ON A TRIAL PERIOD!
N...NICE TO MEET YOU!
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU TOO!